

# FORT COLLINS INTERAGENCY WILDFIRE DISPATCH CENTER AND AVIATION SERVICE CENTER

## *2003 ANNUAL REPORT*



### *ARAPAHO-ROOSEVELT NATIONAL FORESTS AND PAWNEE NATIONAL GRASSLAND*

*Prepared by: Mark Nelson*

*COMBINED REPORT: Agency specific information may need to be extrapolated.*



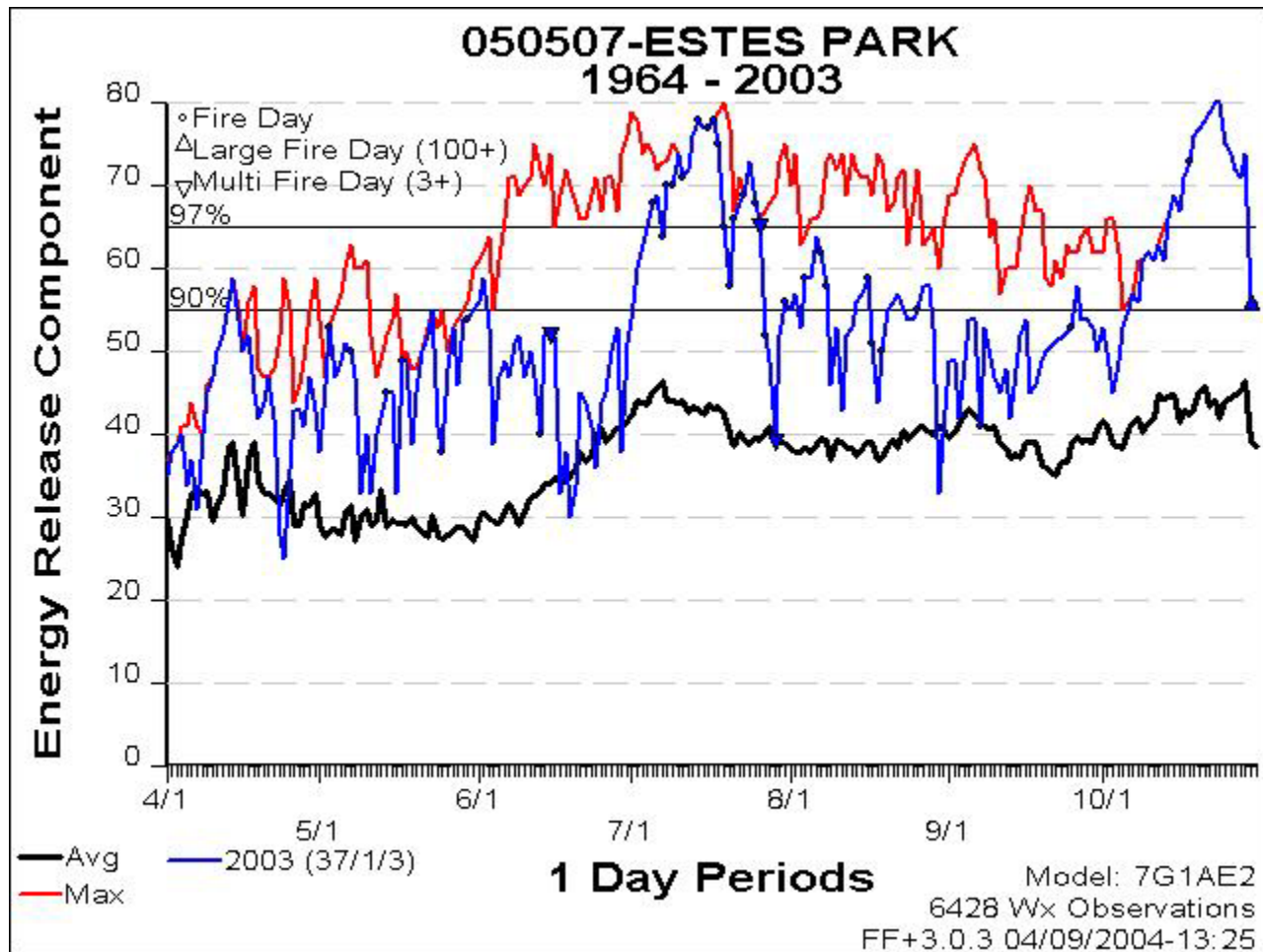
*APHIS Exotic New Castle Disease Operations Center. March 20, 2003. Photo: Mark Nelson*

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.fs.fed.us/arnf/fire/fire.html>

## 2003 FTC NARRATIVE/SUMMARY:

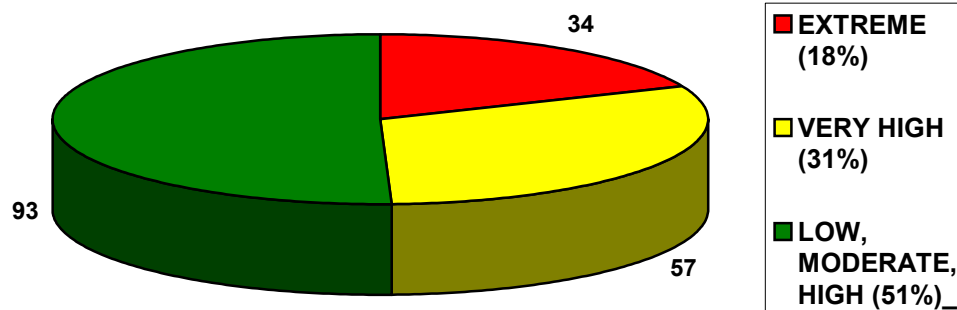
**Weather/Seasonal Severity:** The 2003 fire season was dominated by a continuing drought situation. (See chart below). The dry weather and lack of winter snow pack resulted in record Fire Danger Ratings and an unusually high number of days in the Very High and Extreme fire danger categories once again in 2003. (See chart below). Energy Release Component (ERC) indices set record levels once again during the month of July and October. One significant winter storm that dropped as much as 80 inches of snow in some locations along the Northern Front Range moderated fire dangers in the spring and early summer.

**2003 fire season representative ERC chart for the Estes Park weather station**



Of the established April 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup> fire season (184 days); there were 91 days (49% of fire season) spent above the Very High fire danger rating and 34 days (18% of fire season) spent above the Extreme fire danger level. An average annual fire season would have 18 days (10%) at or above the Very High Fire Danger level and 5-6 days (3%) in the extreme fire danger level (See chart on next page).

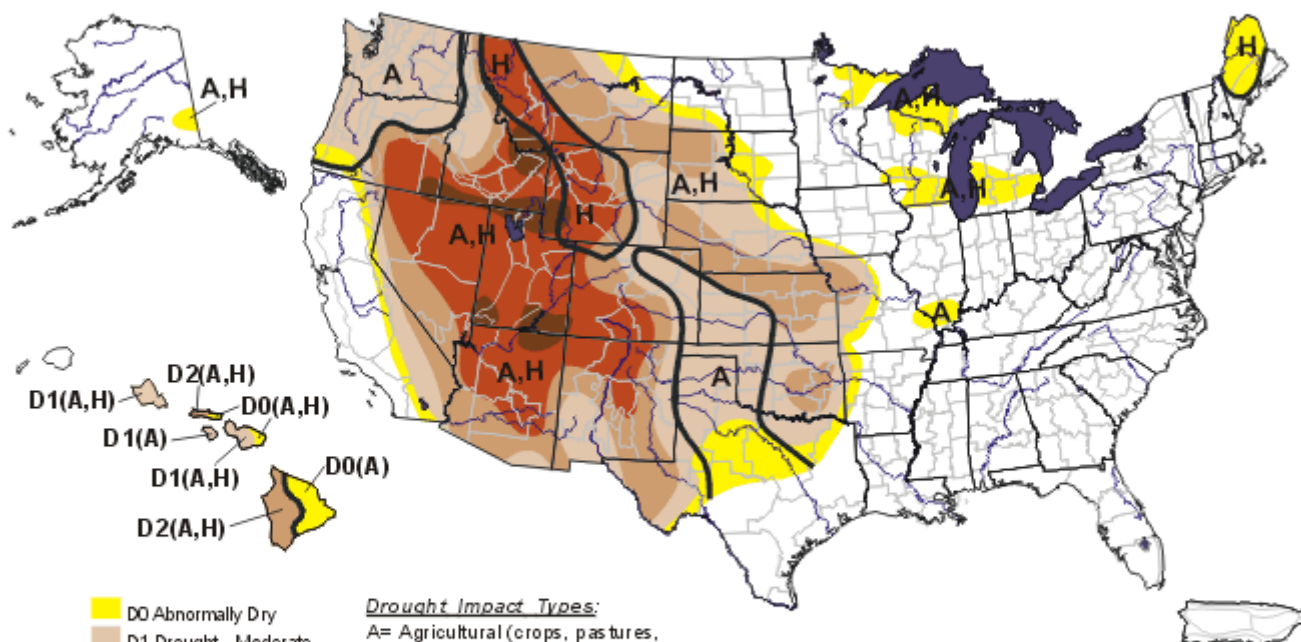
**2002 FIRE DANGER DAYS BY CLASS**  
(Fire Season of April 15th-October 15th = 184 Days)



# U.S. Drought Monitor

July 29, 2003

Valid 8 a.m. EDT



- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought—Moderate
- D2 Drought—Severe
- D3 Drought—Extreme
- D4 Drought—Exceptional

Drought Impact Types:

- A= Agricultural (crops, pastures, grasslands)
- H= Hydrological (water)
- No type = both impacts

— Delineates dominant impacts

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



**Released Thursday, July 31, 2003**

**Authors:** David Miskus, NOAA/KPC/JAWF  
and Brad Rippey, USDA/JAWF

**All Risk:** 2003 can best be described as an “All Risk” event year. In January FTC was requested to assist the Western Regional Office of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) located in Fort Collins in its response to the Exotic New Castle Disease that affected the poultry industry in Texas, Oklahoma, California, and Nevada. APHIS was implementing the use of ICS and Overhead Teams in managing the situation. APHIS developed an Emergency Operations Center in Fort Collins that coordinated the response of APHIS personnel (Veterinarians, Animal Health Technicians, etc... to the outbreak areas. Due to drought conditions and short winter staffing FTC requested the assistance of Dave Clement and Susan Ford out of the USFS regional office to assist APHIS in coordinating and implementing their organization. Peggy Kern and Melissa Hunt were hired as AD’s to implement the dispatch organization. Our role had been phased out by the end of April.

The Space shuttle Columbia disaster was the second all risk event that required mobilization of handcrews, county Search and Rescue coordinators, Type II Team members, and miscellaneous overhead positions. There were issues locating and mobilizing non-wildfire resources and hiring authorities under FEMA’s direction with interagency agreement concerns.

The third all risk incident involved mobilizing resources in support of the hurricane Isabel recovery effort on the east coast.

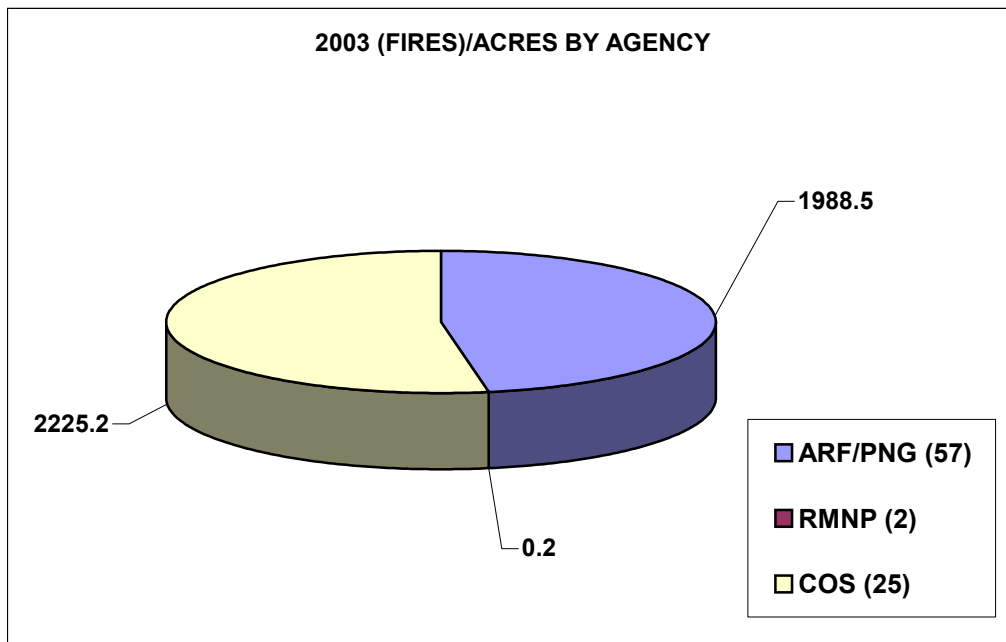
**Initial Attack:** Initial attack activity along the Northern Front Range was near normal in occurrence. Acres burned were above average due to the Overland fire in late October (3,869 Acres), Ted’s Fire (80 Acres), Buckhorn Creek fire (145 Acres) and Cloudy Pass fire (60 Acres). This correlates with the record 39 year ERC readings. (See 2003 Fire Occurrence/Acres compared to five, ten, and forty-five year USFS averages below). Considering the continuing drought situation and number of days spent above the Very High fire danger rating fire statistics could have been much higher.

**Regional Support:** Regional support was above average. The same weather patterns that affected the Northern Front Range also influenced most of the Rocky Mountain Region. Fire activity moderated considerably from the 2002 fire season but continues to be above average.

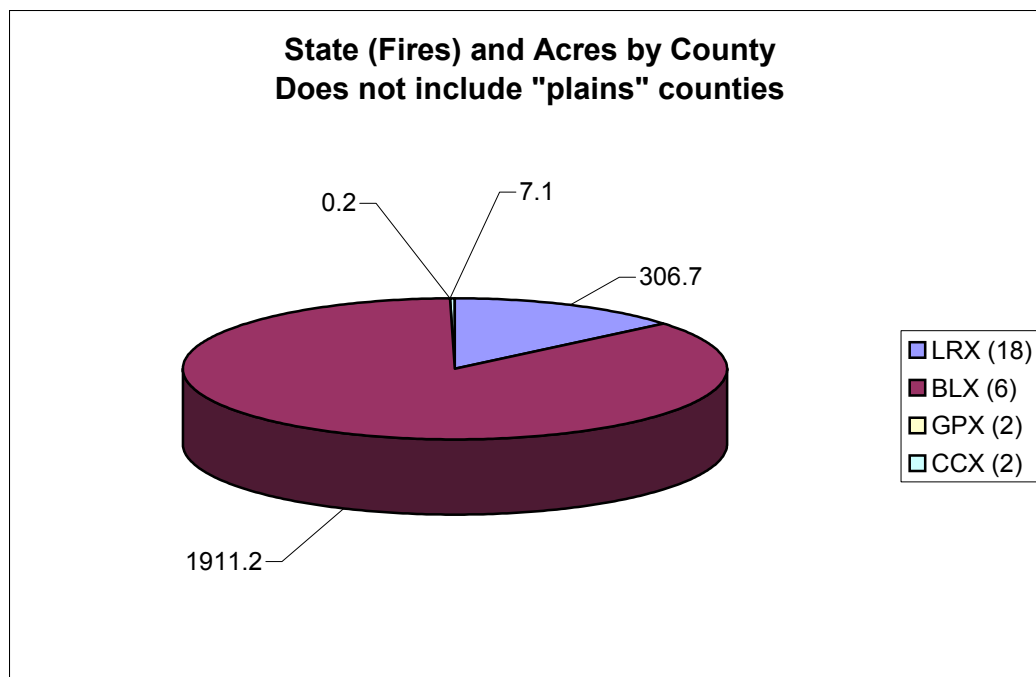
**National Support:** Resources were sent to the following states in 2003: Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Utah, California, Arizona, Texas, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Kansas, Virginia, Washington, Georgia, and Washington D.C. Please see the next page for FTC resource statistics. The largest mobilization was to the Southern California fire situation in October.

### **2003 NORTHERN FRONT RANGE INTERAGENCY FIRE OCCURRENCE/ACRES:**

The Northern Front Range Interagency Cooperators experienced a total of 84 wildfires for a total of 4,213.9 acres. The Interagency breakdown of number of fires (in parentheses) and acres burned are shown in the following chart (does not include the state stats for agricultural/grass fires in Northeast Colorado). These stats are for Fires that received an FTC incident number. State and private statistics are available from the Colorado State Forest Service.



COS Includes: Larimer (LRX), Boulder (BLX), Gilpin (GPX) and Clear Creek (CCX) Counties



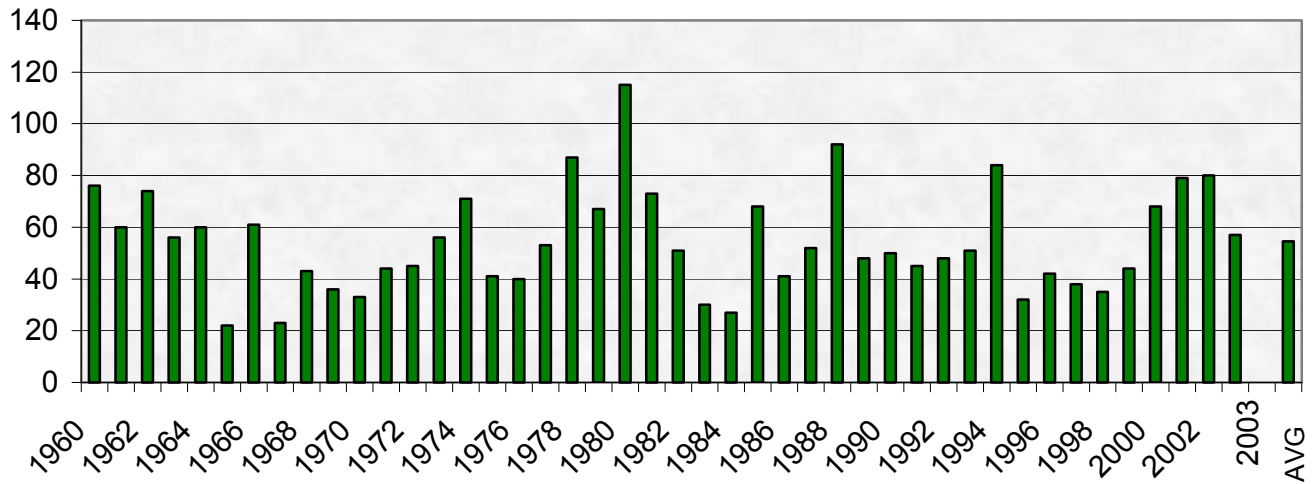
### **2003 ARAPAHO-ROOSEVELT N.F./PAWNEE N.G. FIRE OCCURANCE/ACRES:**

The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland experienced 57 fires for a total of 1,988.5 acres burned (USFS acres only) in 2003. Of the 57 fires 19 fires (33%) were human caused for 1,962.7 acres. 38 fires (67%) were lightning caused for 25.8 acres. The following bar graphs show the fire occurrence and acres burned from 1960 thru 2003 for the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland. Historical records for the interagency cooperators are not available.

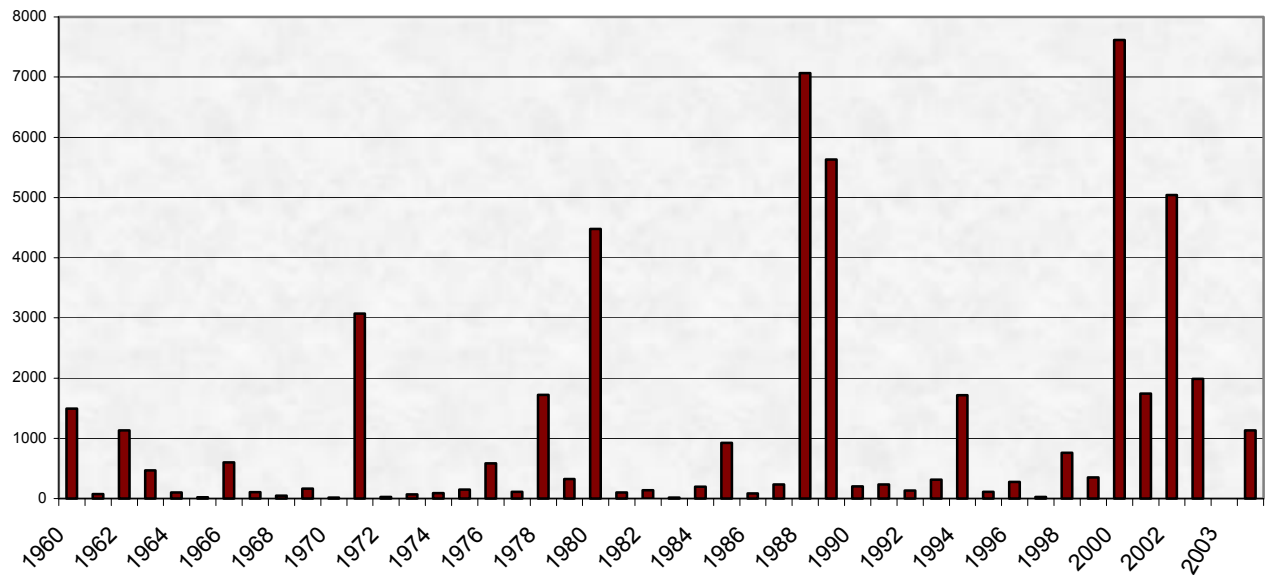
- The 44-year historical average annual fire occurrence and acres burned is: 55 fires for 1,131 acres/year.
- The five-year average annual is: 66 fires for 3,348 acres per year.
- The ten-year average annual is: 56 fires for 1,963 acres per year burned.
- There have been a total of 2,398 fires for 49,762 acres burned from 1960 through 2003 (44 Years).



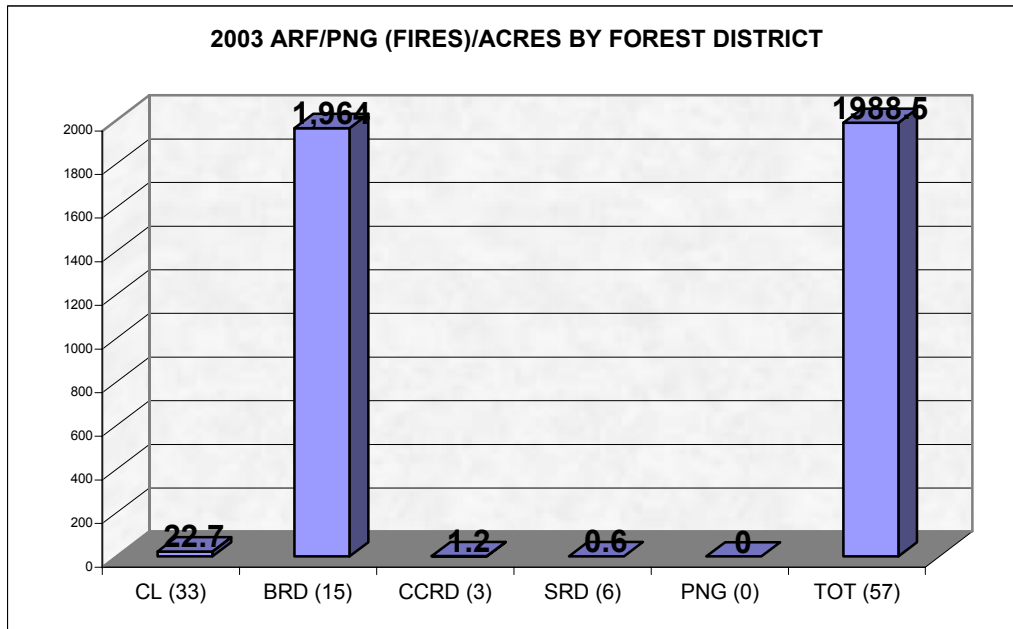
**ARF-PNG # FIRES/YEAR 1960-2003**



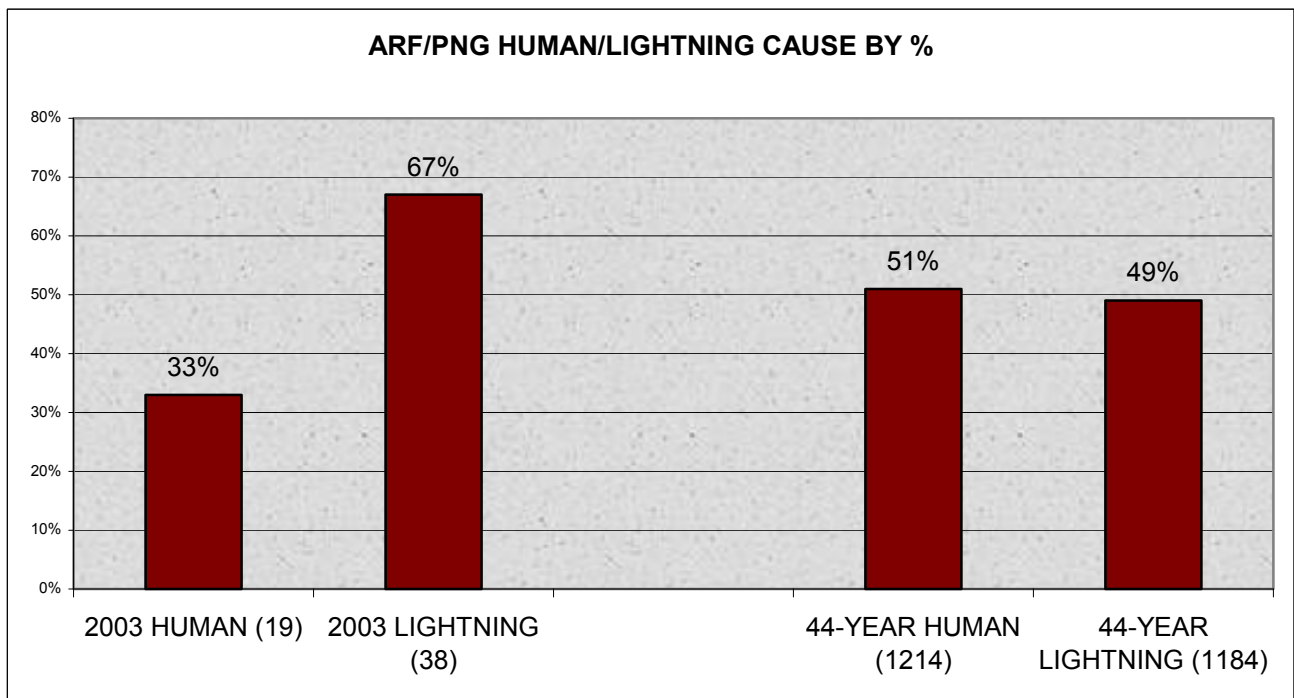
**ARF-PNG ACRES BURNED/YEAR 1960-2003**



The following chart shows the 2003 distribution of (fires) and acres burned by ARNF/PNG district.

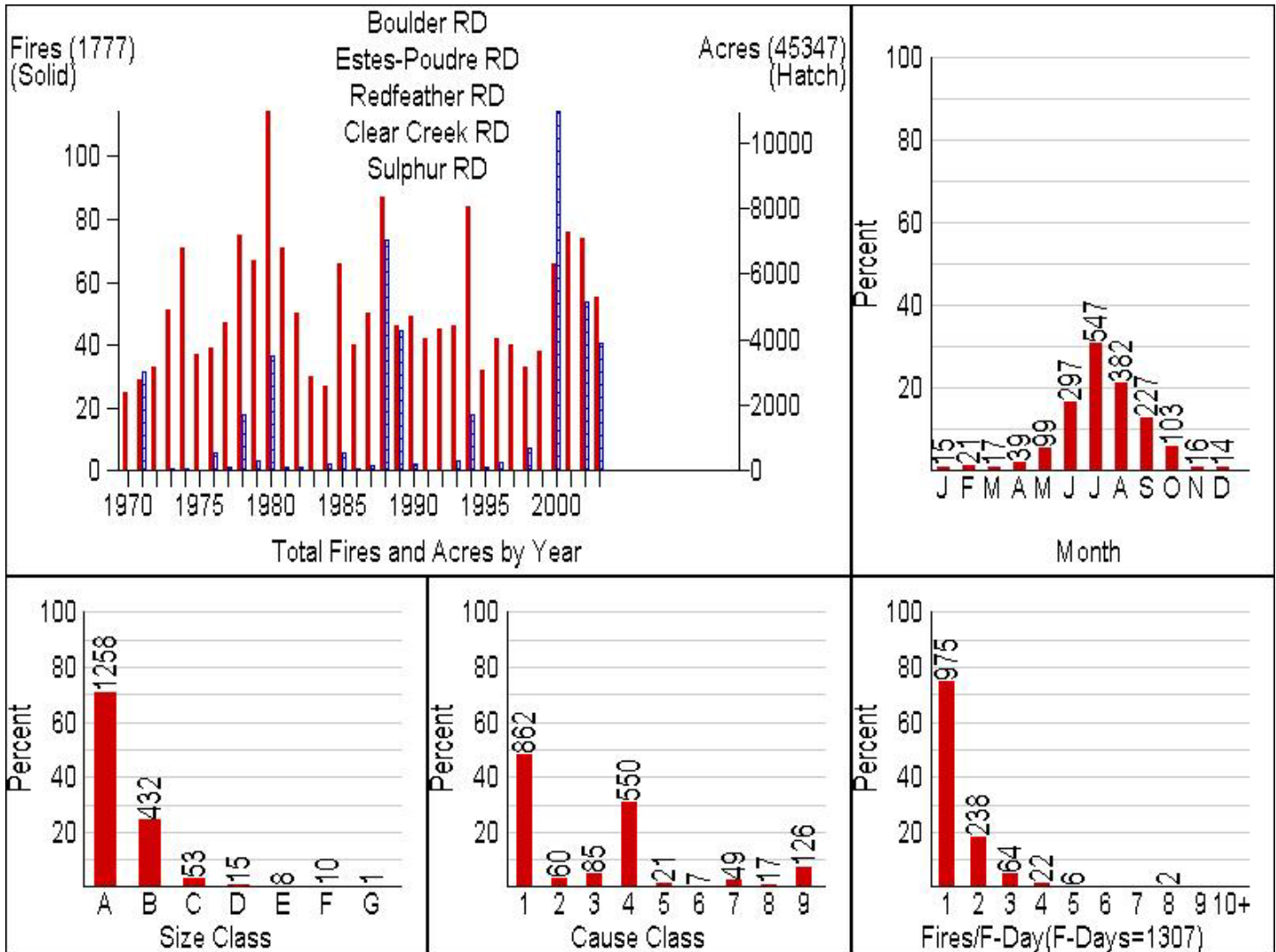


The following chart shows ARNF/PNG fire cause (Human Vs Lightning)  
For 2003 compared to 44-year average.



**The follow series of charts are a compilation of fire records from 1970 to 2003:**  
(Does not include Pawnee National Grassland fires)

- The first chart shows fires and acres burned each year (*Includes Non-forest Service acres*).
- Fire occurrence by month (Fire Season).
- Fires by size class: (A: 0-.25) (B: .25-10) (C: 10-100) (D: 100-300) (E: 300-1,000) (F: 1,000-5,000) (G: 5,000+)
- Fires by cause: (1=Lightning) (2=Equipment) (3=Smoking) (4=Campfire) (5=Debris) (6=Railroad) (7=Arson) (8=Children) (9=Miscellaneous)
- Fires per day.



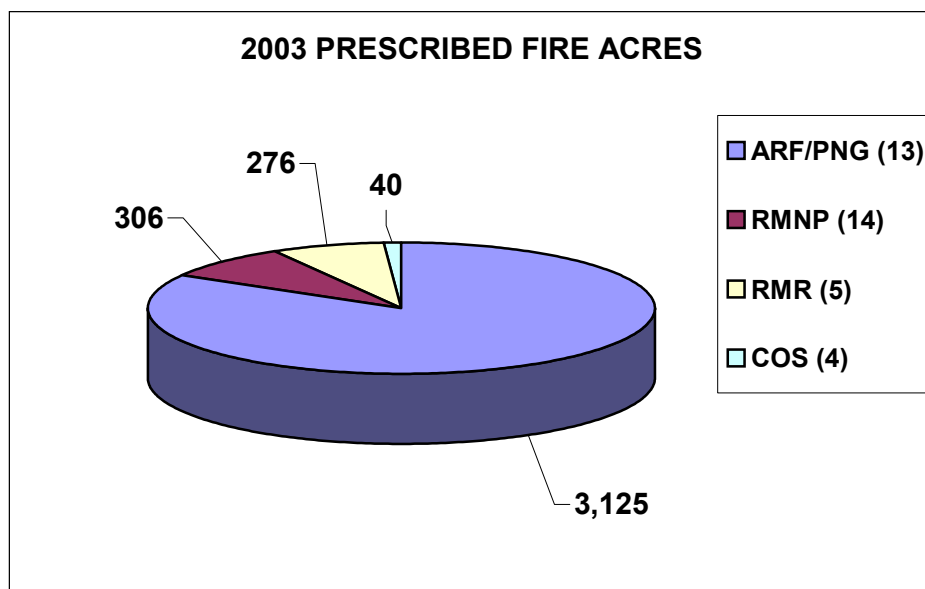


## ARF/PNG LARGE FIRE HISTORY 1960-2003 (300+ ACRES GRASS/100+ ACRES TIMBER):

YEAR	UNIT	FIRE NAME	ACRES	H/L	YEAR	UNIT	FIRE NAME	ACRES	H/L
1960	PNG	RENO	606	H	1988	BRD	BEAVER LK.	757	H
1960	PNG	TOEDTLI	660	L	1988	BRD	CANYON	2,471	H
1962	CCRD	REST HOUSE	1,007	H	1988	RFRD	SWAN	200	L
1962	RFRD	ROACH	748	H	1989	BRD	BLACKTIGER	1,804	H
1962	EPRD	PALISADE	140	H	1989	RFRD	MOBERLY	364	L
1966	EPRD	COMANCHE	470	H	1989	RFRD	LIVERMORE	1,967	L
1968	CCRD	LINCOLN	740	L	1989	RFRD	EATON RES.	100	H
1971	RFRD	BULL MTN.	2,635	H	1989	PNG	HORSETAIL	1,283	H
1971	RFRD	LOOKOUT	124	L	1990	RFRD	GOODELL	141	L
1971	RFRD	SKYLINE	210	H	1993	EPRD	SNOWTOP	275	L
1976	BRD	COMFORTER	256	H	1994	EPRD	HOURLGLASS	1,221	L
1976	RFRD	ANSEL #2	250	H	1994	EPRD	EGGERS	370	L
1978	CCRD	RESERVOIR	400	H	1996	EPRD	CRYSTAL	370	L
1978	RFRD	KILLPECKER	1,200	H	1998	RFRD	GREYROCK	130	H
1979	EPRD	PIERSON PARK	312	H	1998	CCRD	BEAR TRACK	477	H
1980	SRD	M.SUPPLY CK.	477	H	2000	CLRD	BOBCAT GULCH	10,599	H
1980	RFRD	BEARTRAP	2,734	H	2001	PNG	SPRING	1,268	H
1980	EPRD	YOUNG GULCH	180	H	2002	CLRD	PREVENT	190	H
1980	PNG	KLINGENSMITH	1,000	L	2002	CLRD	HEWLETT GULCH	500	H
1985	RFRD	GREYROCK	235	L	2002	CLRD	BIG ELK	4,348	H
1985	PNG	McGREW	310	L	2003	BRD	OVERLAND	3,400	H
1988	RFRD	GRACE CK.	2,800	H					

## 2003 PRESCRIBED FIRE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

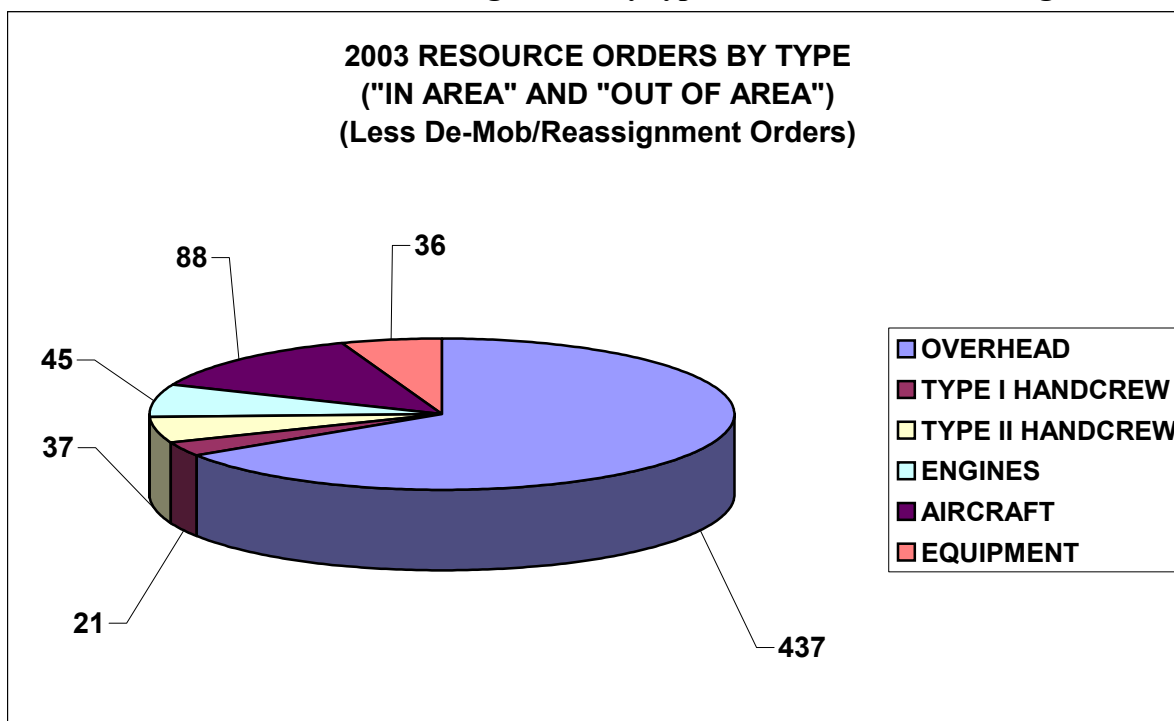
The Interagency Cooperators worked on 36 prescribed fire projects for a total of 3,747 acres treated. Of this total, the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland worked on 13 projects for a total acreage of 3,125 acres. The USFS projects consisted of: Dadd Bennett (1,442 acres), Gross Reservoir Burn on the Boulder Ranger District (115 Acres) pile burns on the Sulphur Ranger District (400 acres) and the Pawnee National Grasslands Plover habitat (45 Acres). The rest of the burns were for wildlife habitat and hazard fuel reduction. The prescribed fire program was hampered by drought and fire conditions during 2003.



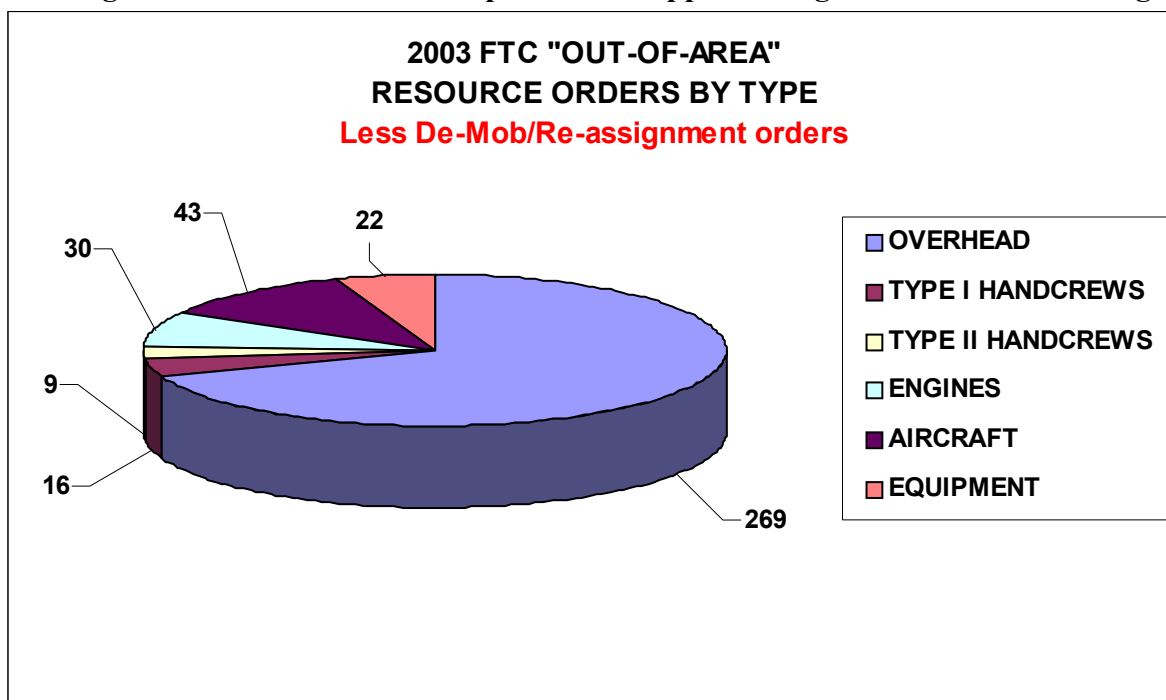
## 2003 FORT COLLINS INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER AND AVIATION SERVICE CENTER REPORT:

FTC filled a total of **670** resource orders. This includes all resource orders for “in-area” and “out-of-area” assignments. *This does not include many resources that were not ordered through official channels (Local I.A.), nor does it include de-mob and reassignment orders for out-of-area resources brought into the area for project fire support.*

The breakdown of resource assignments by type is shown in the following chart.

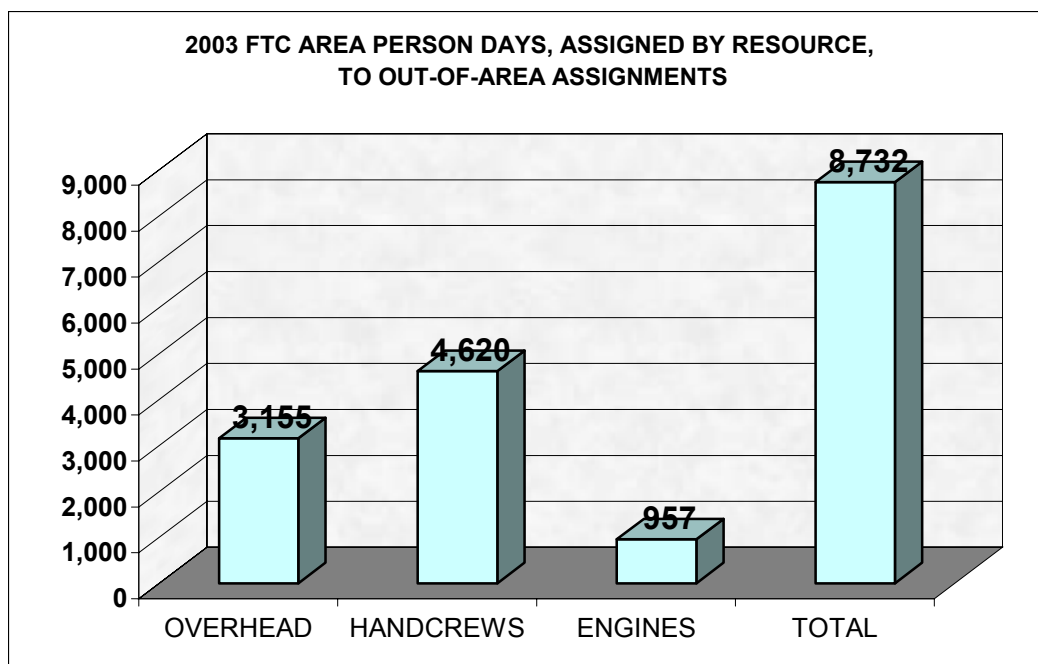
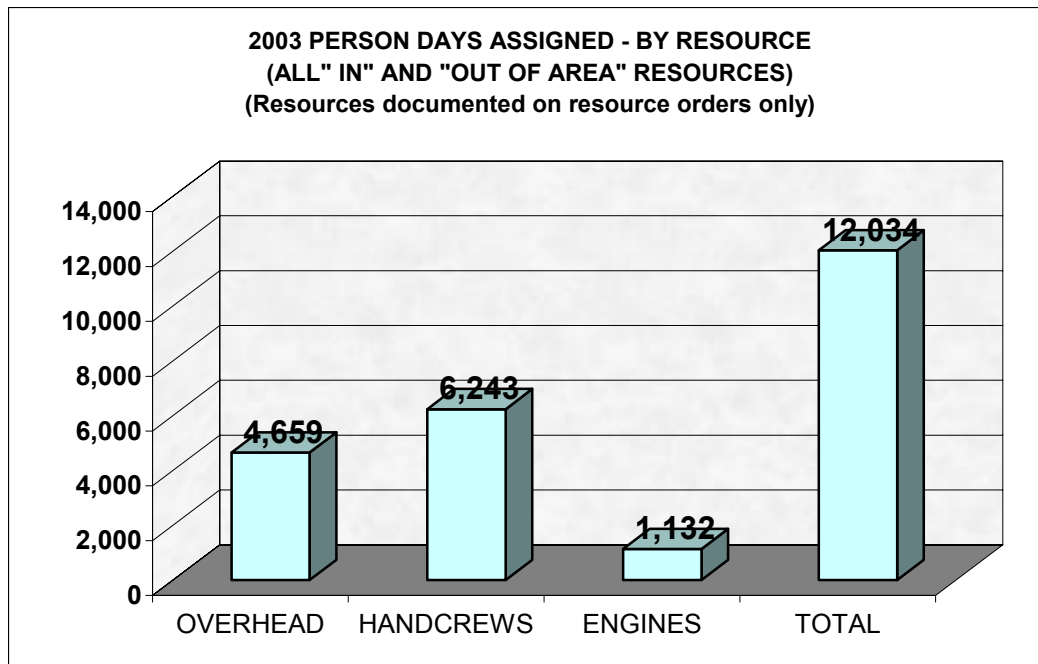


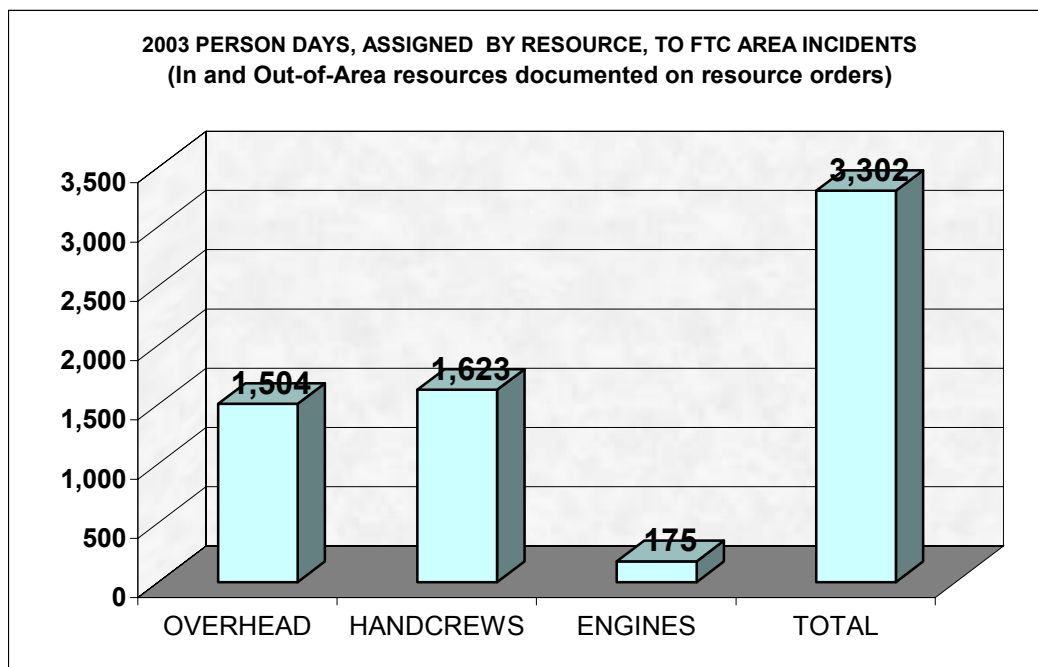
The following chart is FTC resources dispatched in support of regional and national assignments.



There was a total of 12,034 person days *on all assignments documented on resource orders* for the Fort Collins Dispatch Center for the 2003 Fire Season. The following bar graph shows a break down of days by resource type for all in-area and out-of-area resources. (Does not include equipment orders and miscellaneous positions)

Of the total 12,034 person days; 3,302 person days were in support of FTC area fires and 8,732 person days were in support of regional and national incidents.



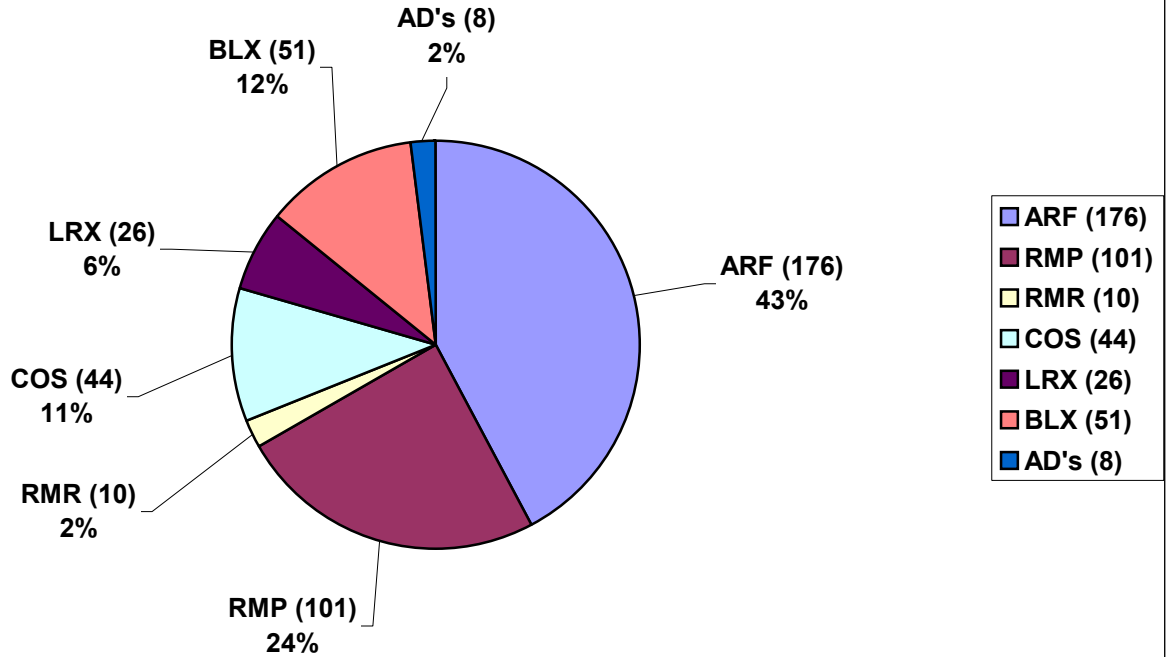


The following two charts show the distribution of incident qualified overhead by agency (Single Resource quals and above only). The number in ( ) shows the number of personnel with an Incident Qualification card by agency. The other number is the percentage of the total Incident Qualified personnel by agency in the FTC Incident Qualified Overhead listing.

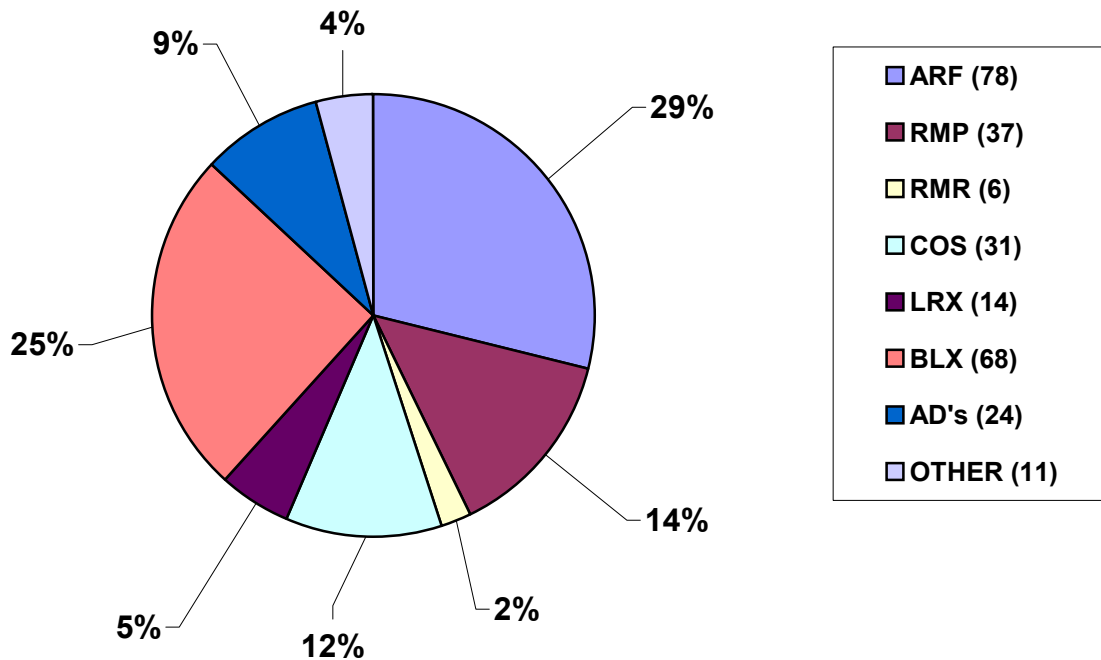
The second chart shows the number of personnel assigned to incidents from each agency for 2003. The number in ( ) is the number of Overhead assignments the agency filled. The percentage of the total number of filled Overhead assignments is also denoted. Example: The Arapaho-Roosevelt N.F./Pawnee N.G. have 43% of the total number of Overhead personnel (chart #1) and filled 29% of the Overhead resource orders (chart #2). These numbers are influenced by the amount of commitment required on the home unit due to fire severity.

Key to Legend Mnemonics:	ARF	Arapaho-Roosevelt/Pawnee
	RMP	Rocky Mountain National Park
	RMR	Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
	COS	Colorado State Forest Service
	LRX	Larimer County Sheriff's Department
	PFAX	Poudre Fire Authority
	WELX	Wellington Fire Protection District
	LVRX	Loveland Fire Department
	BLX	Boulder County Sheriff's Department
	BLCX	Boulder Fire Department
	MNVX	Mountain View Fire Department
	CHVX	Cherryvale Fire Protection District
	BLRX	Boulder Rural Fire Protection District
	LHDX	Lefthand Fire Protection District
	LYNX	Lyons Fire Department
	BLMX	Boulder Mountain Fire Department
	SLFX	Sugarloaf Fire Department
	SSHX	Sunshine Fire Protection District

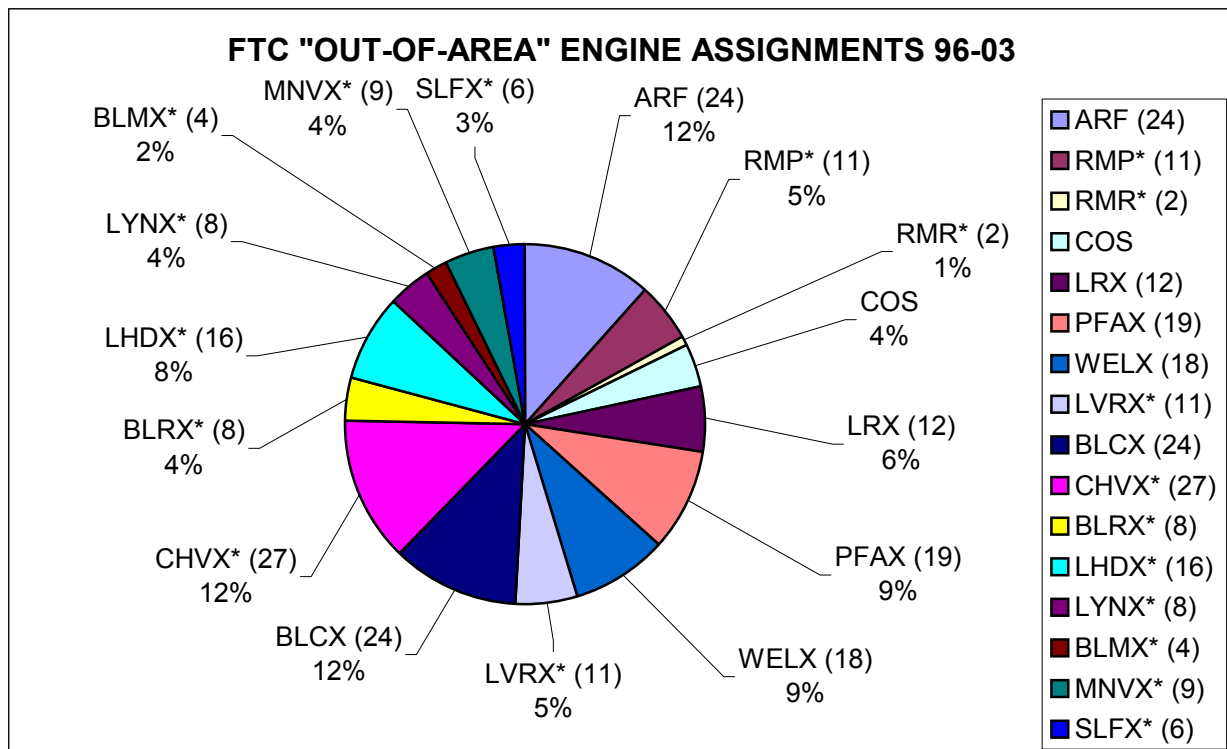
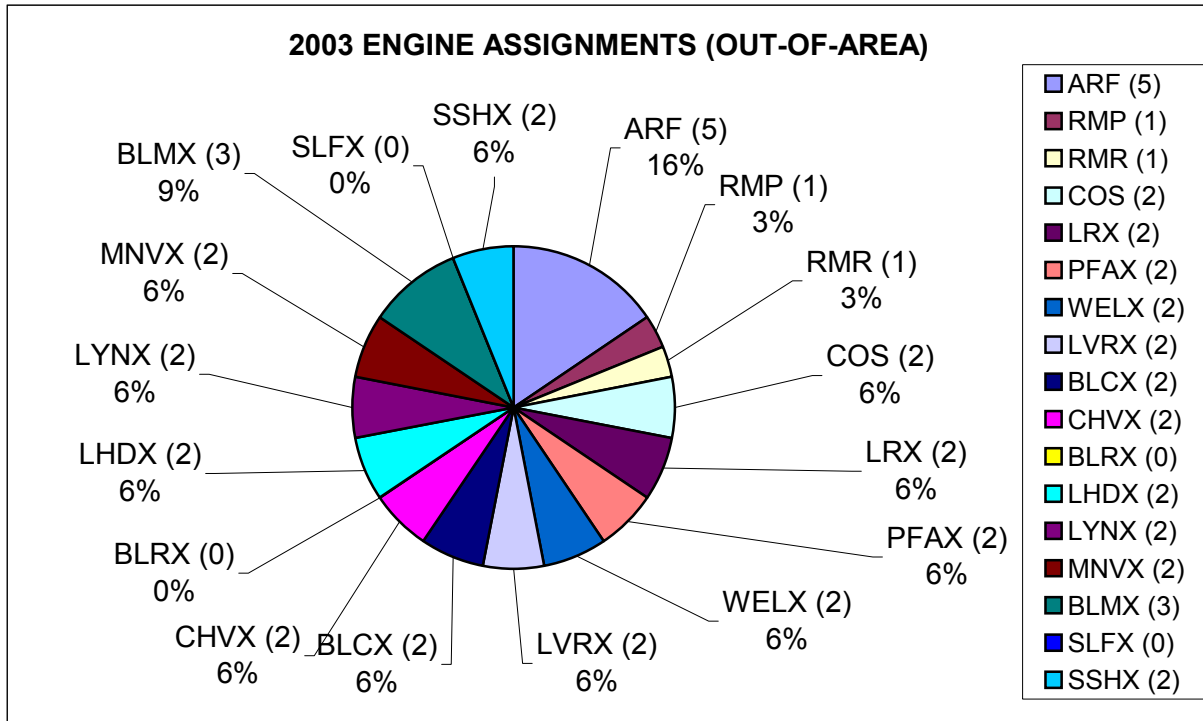
### FTC OVERHEAD PERSONNEL BY AGENCY



### 2003 FTC OVERHEAD ASSIGNMENTS BY AGENCY (Documented on resource orders only)



There were a total of 32 out-of-area engine assignments filled. There were 212 total assignments from 1996 through 2003 (eight years). The average annual number of engine assignments is 26.5 orders per year.



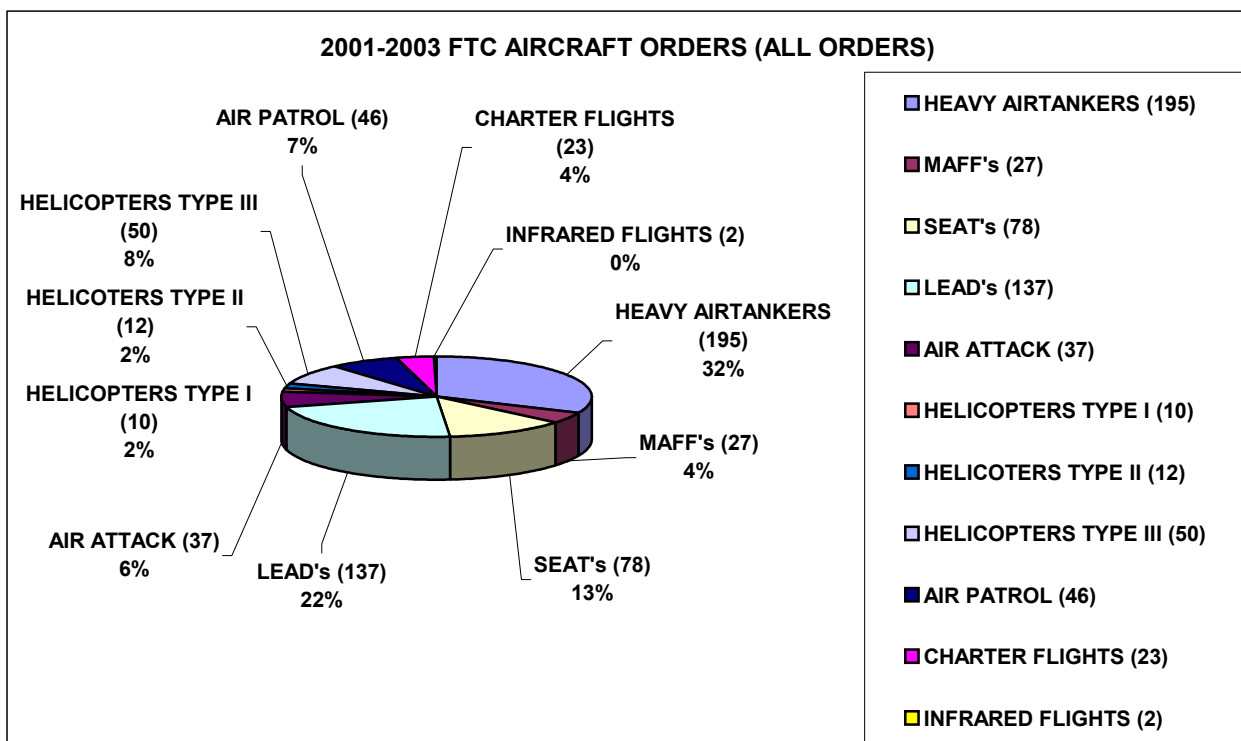
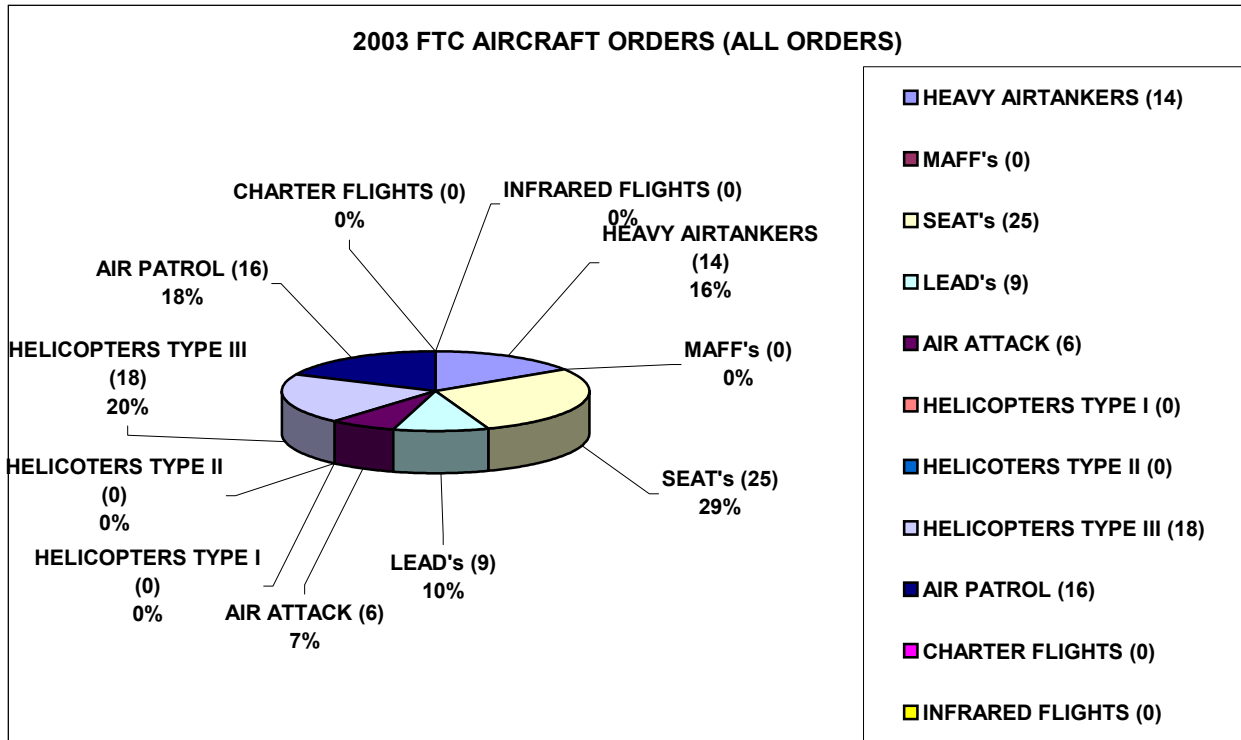
\* Units that have not participated in the engine program for all eight years.



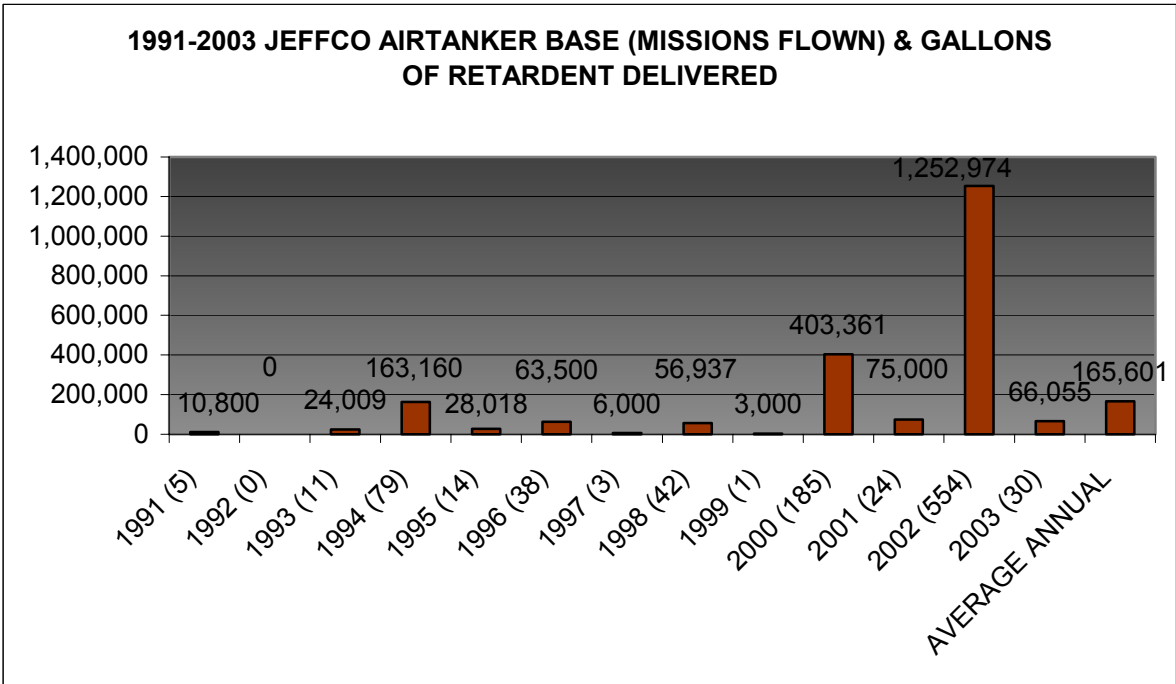
## AVIATION:

The Redfeather Helicopter was assigned at the Redfeather Work Center from June 17 through July 16. It spent the first two weeks of its assignment on a severity assignment out of the Durango Dispatch Center. It only flew for 2.1 flight hours in support of FTC area fires.

FTC processed 88 aircraft orders during the 2003 fire season. See chart below for breakdown of orders and aviation resource types.



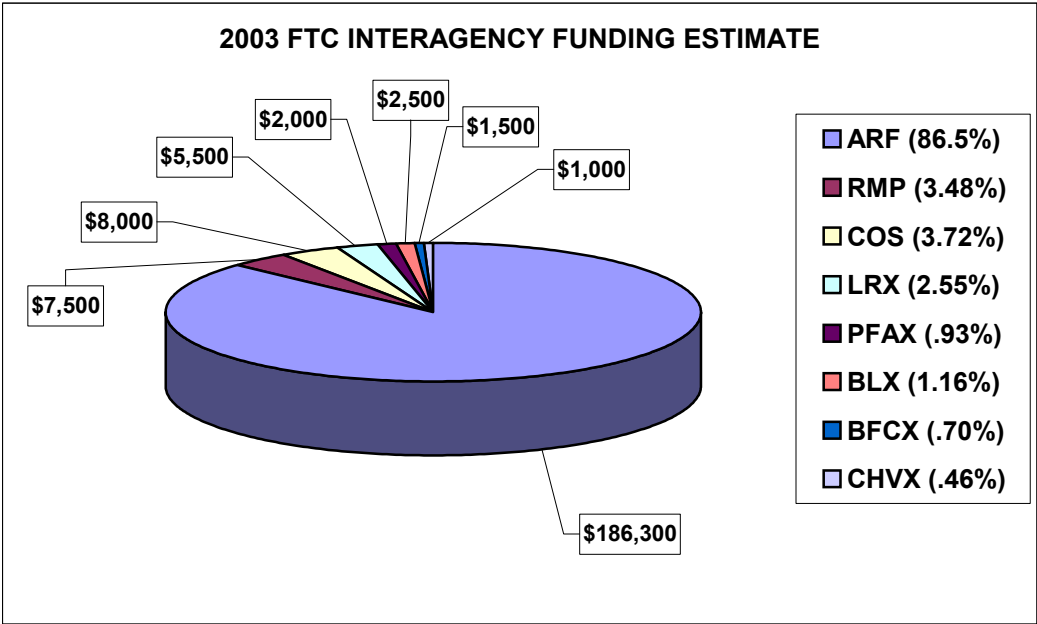
There were 30 missions flown, delivering a 66,055 gallons of retardant, from the Jeffco Airtanker Base in the 2003 fire season. The 5 five year average annual numbers for the Jeffco Airtanker base are 159 missions flown per year and 360,078 gallons of retardant delivered per year.



**2003 FORT COLLINS INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER FUNDING:**

In 2003, contributions from state entities accounted for about 10% of FTC’s operating funds. The CSFS contribution accounted for less than 4%. The Colorado State Forest Service increased its contribution to \$8,000 in 2003 but this is grossly inadequate for the amount of workload required to support state entities and resources.

The following chart is the estimated 2003 funding breakdown.



## **FUNDING SUMMARY:**

**Based on this general analysis a fair share funding level from the Colorado State Forest Service (in conjunction with other local agencies) is \$125,100.**

- Data and information is generic and is open to interpretation by individuals. A common federal/state analysis will need to be done if all six Colorado Dispatch Centers request fair share funding.
- Fair share funding should be addressed as a statewide issue.
- The proposed funding levels will probably require Colorado funding legislation.
- Support could be in the form of monetary or staff position(s).
- State should look at designating or creating a Fire Management Officer position within each Dispatch Center area to coordinate state, local, VFD resources, Agreements, payments, qualifications, Emergency Fire Fund, MAC Group Representative, etc... This would help standardize procedures and facilitate a single point of contact for administrative and operational functions related to dispatch center operations.
- State should consider being the “Collection Point” for other agencies (Counties, VFD’s, etc...) that currently provide funding to the Dispatch Center(s).

## **2004 EMPHASIS AREAS FOR FTC:**

- Move Dispatch Center to new Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest Supervisor’s Office (Fall of 2004).
- Obtain “Fair Share” funding for FTC from state entities.
- Implement new IQCS Qualifications system / Revise CSFS qualifications process.
- Replacement/upgrade of FTS weather stations to new Handar satellite telemetry, radio alert warning system stations at Sulphur and Larimer due to telephone HUB system removal. Preventative maintenance and sensor swaps on existing stations.
- Integrating with proposed Colorado State Office of Emergency Management Dispatch Operation.
- Radio Frequency Authorizations (RFA’s) and interagency licensing.